

Remarks/Arguments

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 5-7 are pending in this application. Claims 1-4 and 8-15 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 5 and 6 have been amended to be in independent form without the introduction of any new matter.

The outstanding Office Action includes a rejection of Claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Revirieux (U.S. Patent No. 4,477,774) and a mistaken suggestion that new drawings need to be filed.

Initially, Applicants acknowledge with gratitude the indication of the PTO-326 (Office Action Summary) of the outstanding Action that Claims 5-7 are only objected to and the further indication of allowable subject matter in the paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4 of the outstanding Action as to Claims 5 and 6 (and, by implication, Claim 7 dependent on Claim 6).

As Claims 1-4 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection of Claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Revirieux is believed to be moot.

The requirement of box 11 of the PTO 326 form for new drawings is clearly erroneous as two (2) replacement sheets for Figures 2 and 6 accompanied the Amendment filed on July 17, 2003.

As the present amendment clearly simplifies issues for appeal and does not create any new search or examination issues as to rewriting Claims 5 and 6 in independent form, entry of the present amendment is respectfully submitted to be in order.

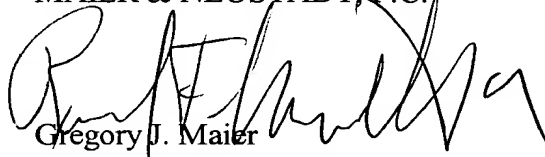
Appl. No. 09/931,888

Reply to Office Action of December 18, 2003

In addition, as withdrawn Claims 8-15 are further canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and as no further issues are believed to remain outstanding relative to this application, it is believed to be clear that this application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregory J. Maier', is written over the printed name.

Gregory J. Maier
Registration No. 25,599

Attorney of Record

Raymond F. Cardillo, Jr.

Registration No. 40,440

Customer Number

22850

(703) 413-3000

Fax No.: (703) 413-2220

GJM/RFC/jmp